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sleeve through said open end, the sleeve defining an interior surface and an exterior surface, the interior surface configured to be placed adjacent an appendage when inserted into the sleeve, the base web further comprising an elastic component for providing the sleeve with form-fitting properties and wherein the nonwoven web forms at least a portion of the interior surface of the sleeve.

5. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 1, wherein the elastic component comprises an elastomeric material the nonwoven web being attached to said elastic component in a manner that allows said elastomeric material of said elastic component to be stretched and contracted for providing said base web with form-fitting properties.

6. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 5, wherein said nonwoven web comprises a thermoplastic polymer.

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7. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 6, wherein said nonwoven web further comprises pulp fibers.

8. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 5, wherein said elastic component comprises a fibrous material.

9. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 5, wherein said elastic component comprises a film.

10. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 5, wherein said elastic component comprises a foam.

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24. (Amended) A device for treating appendage ailments comprising:
a hollow sleeve member having an open end for the insertion of an appendage, said sleeve member comprising an elastic nonwoven material, said elastic nonwoven material being capable of being stretched and contracted for providing said sleeve member with form fitting properties, the elastic nonwoven material comprising an elastic component and a nonwoven web, the sleeve member defining an interior surface and an exterior surface, the interior surface configured to be placed adjacent an appendage when inserted into the sleeve member, the nonwoven web forming at least a portion of the interior surface.

25. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 24, wherein said elastic nonwoven material comprises a laminate including a non-elastic nonwoven web laminated to the elastic component, the elastic component comprising a film or a nonwoven web.

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33. (Amended) A device for treating appendage ailments comprising:

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a hollow sleeve member having a first open distal end and a second open proximal end spaced from said distal end, said sleeve member having a shape configured to receive a finger or a toe, said sleeve member comprising a first panel attached to a second panel, the panels forming seams that extend along the length of the sleeve, the first panel comprising an elastic nonwoven material, said elastic nonwoven material capable of being stretched and contracted for providing said sleeve member with form fitting properties, the second panel comprising a nonwoven web, the nonwoven web defining at least a portion of an interior surface of the hollow sleeve.

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35. (Amended) A device as defined in claim 33, wherein the nonwoven web of said second panel is non-elastic.

REMARKS

Applicants and their attorney wish to express their gratitude to Examiner Hamilton for the courtesy and assistance she extended during the recent personal interview. During the interview, Applicants' attorney and Examiner Hamilton discussed amending the independent claims (claims 1, 24, and 33) to state that the device for treating appendage ailments of the present invention includes an elastic component for providing the sleeve with form-fitting properties. Further, the device includes a nonwoven web that forms at least a portion of the interior surface of the sleeve. Claim 33 has been further amended to require that the device for treating appendage ailments be made from a first panel attached to a second panel.

In the latest Office Action, independent claims 1, 24, and 33 were rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,181,914 to Zook in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,804,021 to Abuto. As discussed during the recent personal interview, however, it is believed that the claims patentably define over the above combination of references.